



### *People Must Govern – Not Money* Resolution

Whereas the foundation of our democracy is free, fair, and credible elections; and

Whereas our democracy is a representative one, it is essential that elected officials represent and pursue the interests and needs of their voters, to avoid self-dealing relative to their personal financial interests, and avoid corruption and undue influence from outside financial interests; and

Whereas election campaigns, from the earliest days of our democracy, were conceived as a very public process in which the candidates seek to inform and motivate their electorate to choose them to represent the interests and needs of their district; and

Whereas informed voters need timely disclosed and sufficient information to enable them to make informed decisions and give proper weight to different speakers and messages; and

Whereas rulings of the United States Supreme Court over the last 50 years have expanded the meaning of the First Amendment of the federal constitution so as to empower unlimited political money with “free speech” protections, thus invalidating longstanding state and federal anti-corruption and election spending laws

Whereas the massive donations and spending by organizations and the uber wealthy in our elections overwhelm the voices and needs of the average voter, or an entire community if a race becomes highly competitive and attracts national money, and

Whereas Supreme Court rulings have also led to a dramatic increase in “dark money,” funds raised by non-profit organizations for the purpose of influencing elections, that are not required to disclose the identities of their donors, and

Whereas research has documented that the bulk of advertising funded by independent groups often use deceptive identities, is oppositional in nature, is often intended to distort the facts regarding a candidate, and inflame voter opinion and ultimately engenders irreconcilable partisanship in our legislatures, and

Whereas some Michigan corporations have launched, and solely financed, deceptive non-profit social welfare dark money groups for the sole purpose of defeating local elected officials that have refused to support their private interests, and

Whereas the costs of the 2020 federal election exploded from \$6.3 Billion in 2016 to nearly \$15 Billion in 2020, and

Whereas dark money funding was, for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, the largest class of money in Michigan’s 2018 race for governor, and



## Michiganders For Fair & Transparent Elections



Whereas survey after survey for the past 12 years have revealed that 70+% of independents, 72+% of conservatives, and 85% of liberals believe political and election money practices are a major problem and reform is a top non-partisan priority.

In recognition of the increasing importance of the role of full disclosure and limits on election money, as well as disclosure of candidate personal financial interests in protecting the integrity of our elections, maintaining the commitment of the people to their democracy, and shielding our government against foreign interests,

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that

In order to restore faith in our elections, achieve equality of voice, and true representation, we, the elected officials of \_\_\_\_\_hereby:

- 1) Call on our congressional delegation to support and pass an amendment to the US Constitution, and submit it to the states for ratification, a Constitutional amendment to clarify that States may set even-handed limits on the spending of money to influence elections in the States and that Congress may set even-handed limits on the spending of money to influence Federal elections, and that in so doing, the States and Congress may distinguish between natural persons and legally recognized entities such as corporations, unions and government authorities, and,
- 2) Call on the Michigan Secretary of State, the Michigan Attorney General, and our Governor to prepare, at the earliest possible date, recommended legislation that requires disclosure of all sources of dark/secret money in our elections, as well the funding sources of public messaging during our elections.
- 3) Call on our state delegation to support an amendment to the Michigan constitution and passage of enabling legislation to require the disclosure of all election campaign financing associated with public election messaging generated by any and all persons and entities.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That a copy of this resolution be prepared and submitted to the Leadership of the U.S. Congress, and our delegation therein, and the President of the Michigan Senate, the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives and our elected representatives in both chambers.